

REMARKS

Claims 1-20 remain pending.

It is respectfully submitted that the examiner has not appreciated the key features of the invention. The invention is not a prior art segmented top light with LEDs instead of incandescent bulbs, as the examiner's rejection over Forbes suggests. A key feature of the invention is that each segment in the top light has its color "controllable to create a variety of light colors" for conveying information about the gaming device" (without physically changing any part of the top light) to meet the varying requirements of the casinos and jurisdictions (see specification page 1, lines 14-29). Simply replacing a light bulb with a particular color LED would not serve the function provided by the present invention. The examiner rejected the independent claims primarily over the conventional top light shown in Forbes's Fig. 1, which is the exact top light mentioned in Applicant's background on page 1, lines 14-27.

Top lights are used on slot machines so they can be seen by casino attendants above the slot machines. The color of each segment and the combinations of the illuminated segments convey to the casino attendant information such as the need for maintenance or to pay off a large win, etc. Each casino or jurisdiction may have their own requirements for the segment color order and combinations. In the prior art, each segment had a conventional white light bulb, and the segment itself was a colored plastic cylinder. So, the physical features of the top light had to be changed for each casino/jurisdiction.

In Applicant's invention, each segment has red, green, and blue LED, where the brightness of each LED is controllable to generate any color in each segment without any change to the physical top light.

The examiner rejected Claims 1-20 as being obvious over the combination of Forbes (US 6,043,615), Griswold (US 6,027,115), and Heidel (US 6,014,594).

The Forbes invention is the replacement of fluorescent bulbs and controllers that are used to backlight the display glass of a conventional slot machine. Forbes replaces these components with colored fluorescent bulbs and controllers that can blink and convey

promotional information via the display glass. Forbes emphasizes that the invention uses the existing lamp fixtures in conventional slot machines. (See col. 1, line 66, to col. 2, line 10.)

The most relevant aspect of Forbes, which the examiner points out, is Forbes' description of the conventional slot machine top light of Fig. 1, where differently colored segments 24, 26, 28, and 30 are "used to signal special events." (Col. 1, lines 28-37.) Forbes then states that such top lights are expensive and add complexity to the slot machine (col. 1, lines 32-34) and that his invention is an improvement since there needs to be no retrofitting of conventional slot machines (col. 1, lines 34-40).

There is no disclosure in Forbes that suggests modifying the conventional top light and, in fact, Forbes teaches against modifying the conventional top light by, instead, using replacement fluorescent bulbs behind the display glass to signal promotional events. Still further, the pertinent part of Forbes is already described in Applicant's background of the invention.

The examiner also points to Forbes' col. 4, lines 38-47, for teaching RGB light sources; however, this portion of Forbes describes multi-colored fluorescent bulbs behind the display glass. This has nothing to do with a top light or the premise of Applicant's invention that the top light segment colors are different for different casinos and jurisdictions. In Forbes', the selection of colors is for purely aesthetic reasons.

The examiner cites Griswold for teaching LEDs to illuminate reel symbols. This, in combination with Forbes, could not suggest the Claim 1 limitation of "each segment [of the top light] comprising a combination of red, green, and blue light emitting diodes (LEDs) whose individual intensities are controllable to create a variety of light colors for conveying information about the gaming device."

The examiner mentions on page 3 of the office action that "various arrangements of LED's would be aesthetically pleasing." A top light on a slot machine is not for aesthetic purposes, and each segment and each segment color is mandated by the casino or jurisdiction to perform a specific function. For example, a certain color code combination may identify a denomination to the attendant; another segment color code combination identifies that the

player must be paid by an attendant; and another segment color code combination identifies that the machine is broken and needs maintenance. The player is generally unaware of the top light color codes.

For rejecting Claim 9 (the slot machine has a display screen), the examiner cites Heidel. Similarly, for rejecting Claim 15 (the RGB LEDs are controlled to convey the need for maintenance), the examiner also cites Heidel. However, Heidel could not suggest anything more than a conventional top light used to convey the need for maintenance.

Since Claim 1 has been shown to be non-obvious, its dependent claims are also respectfully submitted to be allowable. The various dependent claims recite details of a controller, the number of segments, and other features.

The other independent claim is Claim 17, which has the same patentable features as Claim 1. Accordingly, Claim 17 and its dependent Claims 18-20 are respectfully submitted to be patentable.

Should the Examiner have any questions, please call the undersigned at (408) 382-0480 x202.

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Date of Signature

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